

**2011 Differentiated Instruction Institute:
“Just Right—Right Now”—Across the Spectrum**

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**Differentiation in Practice:
Instruction for Maximum
Learning for all Students**



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How Am I Doing?

Differentiation Reflection Checklist for Teachers

10 Tiered Instruction Targets	I'm there!	I'm making good progress.	I'm trying to move in that direction.
1. I identify the essential understandings that I want students to know.			
2. If you asked the students in my class, they would be able to tell you the goals of the unit.			
3. I pre-assess my students to determine strengths and needs.			
4. I plan the final assessment before designing the instruction.			
5. I use assessment to help determine student groupings.			
6. I arrange my groups flexibly; they may vary daily.			
7. I design interesting and relevant lessons to hook and engage the learner.			
8. I create tasks with difficulty and skill levels that are slightly above students' levels.			
9. I begin by first determining on-level tasks that meet the essential understandings, and then I scaffold up or down appropriately for students.			
10. I adjust the complexity, support, pace, materials, and/or directions to meet the needs of learners.			

Do we know “it” when we see it?!

Consider these two approaches to activating prior knowledge in fifth grade social studies classes and think about which one builds more connections:

Scenario 1	Scenario 2
<p>Teacher: “Today we will be starting a unit on the conditions in the states following the Civil War. It was a period of time referred to as Reconstruction. What do you think of when you hear the word Reconstruction?”</p> <p>Max: “It must mean that something was torn down because it has to be constructed again.”</p> <p>Teacher: “Thank you, Max. Who has another thought?”</p> <p>Sophie: “When a tree fell on our house in the storm, we had to reconstruct the garage roof.”</p> <p>Teacher: “Good connection. Can someone else give me an idea?”</p> <p>Reggie: “When things are broken, like my little brother breaks my toys, I try to put them back together. Isn’t that reconstruction?”</p> <p>Teacher: “All these ideas tell us something about Reconstruction. Turn to page 128 in your book and let’s get some more information.”</p>	<p>Teacher: “I want to show you several photographs from cities and towns that were taken during and right after the Civil War. While I do that I want you to write down descriptive words or phrases that come to mind when you see the pictures.”</p> <p>Teacher: “Now, I want you to share these words with one or two people next to you and see if you can add new ones to your own list.”</p> <p>Teacher: “Tell me some of the words and I will write them on the chart paper?”</p> <p>Students: “destruction, ruin, bombed out, death, abandoned, lonely, hungry, poor, wounded, broken, destroyed, help, sad, homeless, hopeful, lost, start over”</p> <p>Teacher: “So...here’s my question. Why is the period right after the civil war referred to as “Reconstruction?” Using what you know and additional information you might have gathered from the pictures, talk to your neighbor(s) and come up with as many areas as you can that you think needed “reconstructing?”</p> <p>{Students list areas and support responses.}</p> <p>Teacher: “Here’s a follow-up question. Have there been times in your lives when a period of “reconstruction” has existed either personally or in our country or world?”</p>

12 Questions to Prompt Decisions about Tiering by Process

How will I Engage Students?	Notes to Self
1. What information about my students have I learned from the preassessments?	
2. What grouping arrangements are optimal at different stages of the lesson. (When do I use whole group, small group, partners, or individual tasks.	
3. What leveled books and resources do I have to support learning? Do I need to secure additional materials?	
4. What strategies will I use to make connections to what students know already (activate prior knowledge)?	
5. What degree of choice should I offer to students at each tier?	
6. What are entry levels of thinking for students at each tier?	
7. What questions can I pose to scaffold or extend thinking?	
8. How much complexity in a task or assignment can students, pairs, or groups manage?	
9. How quickly or how slowly should tasks advance for each tier of students?	
10. How much independence will specific students, pairs, or groups be able to handle and how much support will I need to provide?	
11. What will be the most effective strategies to use to deliver content?	
12. How will I measure student progress?	

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Ways to Differentiate Instruction

	Do I Differentiate using...	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1.	...assessment data				
	a. interest surveys				
	b. learning style inventories				
	c. brain-compatible indicators				
	d. skill competency checklists				
	e. pre- and post-test results				
2.	...the content level of the material				
	a. different levels of textbooks				
	b. different levels of resource materials				
	c. textbook(s) on audio				
	d. interactive, student-directed instruction				
	e. first person accounts				
3.	...a variety of resources				
	a. peer and volunteer resources				
	b. library books and reference materials				
	c. primary documents				
	d. computers				
	e. use of internet technologies				
4.	...varied instructional delivery systems				
	a. games and simulations				
	b. learning/interest centers				
	c. cooperative learning activities				
	d. individual inquiry and study contracts				
	e. choice of products to demonstrate mastery				
5.	...the duration of learning activities				
	a. division of task into two or more sessions				
	b. "Age, plus/minus 2 minutes" to focus instruction				
	c. re-teaching as needed				
	d. allowing for student choice				
	e. providing enrichment				

	Differentiate	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
6.	...a variety of thinking strategies				
	a. finding support in text for responses				
	b. modeling “think alouds” when answering				
	c. making text to real-world connections				
	d. responding from many points of view				
	e. interacting at high levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy				
7.	...using student as instructor				
	a. reciprocal teaching				
	b. questioning the text (or teacher)				
	c. peer-learning groups				
	d. setting performance goals				
	e. student-directed learning experiences				
8.	... student involvement in planning				
	a. developing organizational skills				
	b. developing time management strategies				
	c. establishing targets for learning				
	d. developing rubrics for products or performance				
	e. determining ways to demonstrate mastery of content				
9.	...adjustments in expected outcomes				
	a. gearing standards to individual abilities				
	b. gearing standards to individual interests				
	c. gearing standards to group norms				
	d. setting criteria for quality of work				
	e. setting criteria for quantity of work				
10.	...the evaluation process				
	a. self-evaluation				
	b. portfolio evaluation				
	c. product evaluation				
	d. performance evaluation				
	e. selected response evaluation				